

NWS Grand Junction, Colorado

January 2021

Climate Summary for Eastern Utah and Western Colorado

Produced by Megan Stackhouse, Meteorologist

The new year started off cool and dry under a weak ridge of high pressure with inversions and low stratus/dense fog persisting in some of the valleys. A couple of weak disturbances early on in the second week of the month brought a quick shot of snow to the higher elevations with generally 5 to 10 inches of snow falling up north with 2 to 6 inches in some of the valleys. Mid January was relatively uneventful with generally dry conditions and occasional light snow falling in the mountains. The latter half of the month saw some stronger systems move into the region. A low pressure system brought 3 to 9 inches of snow to the southern valleys on January 19th before a series of storms produced 1 to 2 feet of snow in most of the western Colorado mountains on January 22-25. This system also brought moderate snow to the valleys with the Grand Valley receiving 2 to 6 inches of snow. The unsettled weather continued through the end of the month as several systems brought a combination of mountain snow and valley rain/snow.

January was on average drier than normal across the region as 9 out of the 10 automated stations found at airports across eastern Utah and western Colorado ended the month with below normal precipitation. January was either cooler or warmer than normal across the region depending on where you were located with mean temperatures ranging anywhere from 1 to 3 degrees below normal or up to 2 degrees warmer than normal.

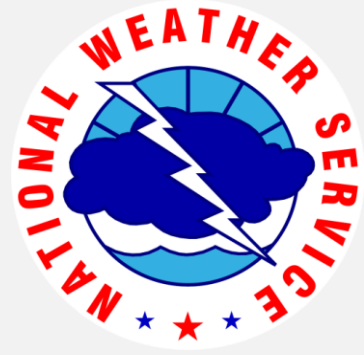
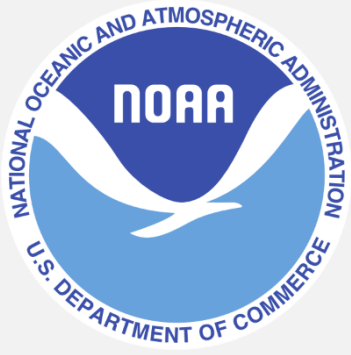


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Please note that all data mentioned is collected from our automated observing stations from 10 different airports across eastern Utah and western Colorado. Some of our cooperative observers in more remote areas may have measured warmer or colder temperatures, or more or less precipitation than what was mentioned in this summary.

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Story of the Month

22-25 JANUARY WINTER STORM

A closed low pressure system moved across the Western Slope with a secondary wave passing through in its wake. This led to heavy snow over some of the mountains with up to 2 feet estimated in portions of the southwest San Juans. The Grand Valley also received 2 to 6 inches of snow.



Snow at GJT Airport on 1/24/21
(Credit: NWS)

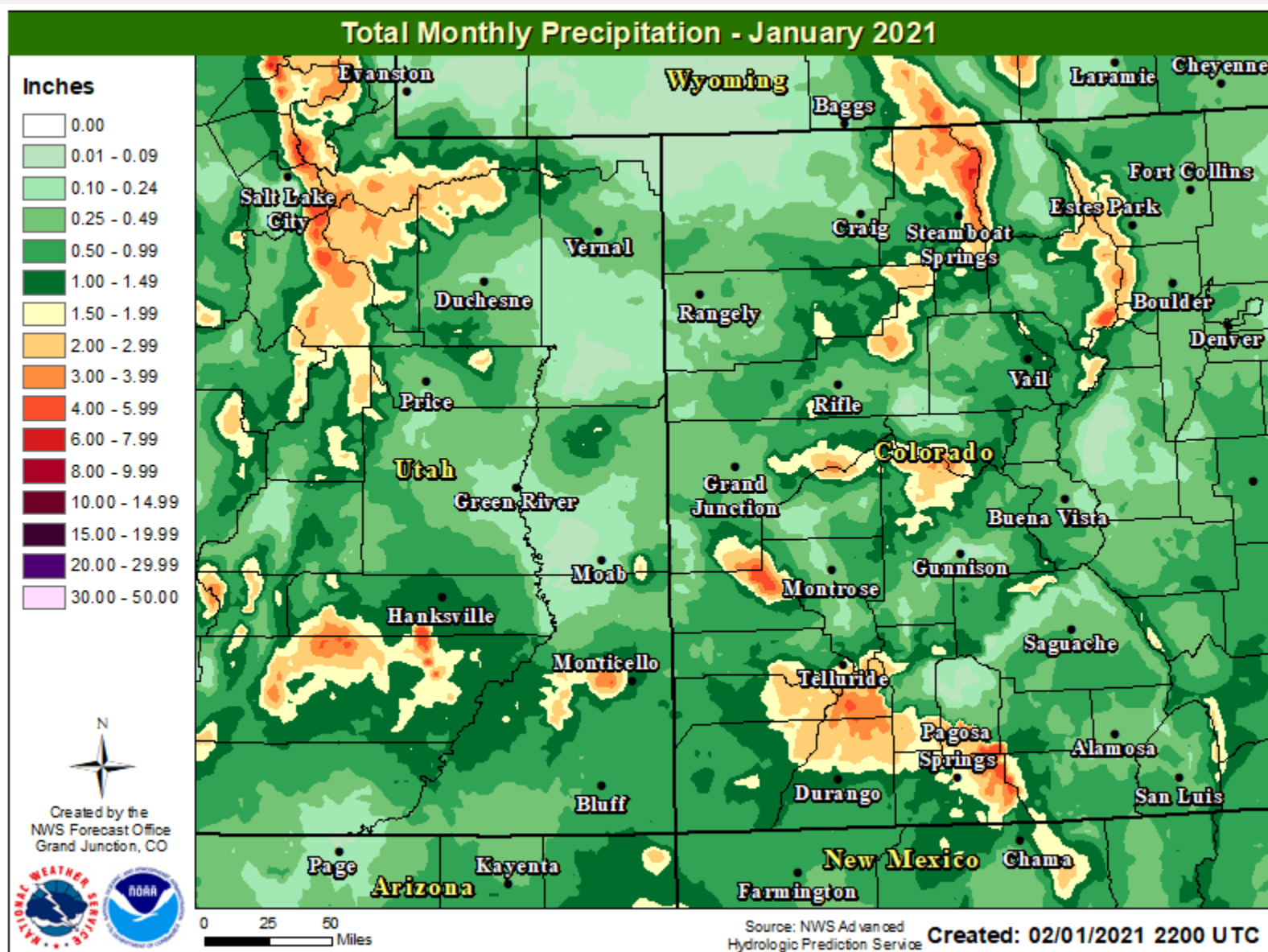
January 2021 Temperatures

Location	Average Temp (°F) (Versus Normal)	Warmest Temp (°F)	Coldest Temp (°F)
Aspen, CO	21.4 (+1.6)	49 on 1/28	-6 on 1/27
Cortez, CO	27.8 (-0.2)	54 on 1/17	-5 on 1/27
Craig, CO	16.0 (+0.3)	47 on 1/29	-15 on 1/11
Durango, CO	22.5 (-1.2)	50 on 1/16	-14 on 1/27
Grand Junction, CO	28.1 (+0.7)	55 on 1/29	4 on 1/1-2
Meeker, CO	18.1 (-2.0)	49 on 1/28	-15 on 1/11
Montrose, CO	28.1 (+1.7)	54 on 1/29	5 on 1/27
Rifle, CO	25.5 (+1.5)	50 on 1/29	1 on 1/11
Canyonlands Airport, UT	23.6 (-3.4)	49 on 1/29	-2 on 1/2, 11-12
Vernal, UT	15.8 (-3.2)	40 on 1/17	-6 on 1/4

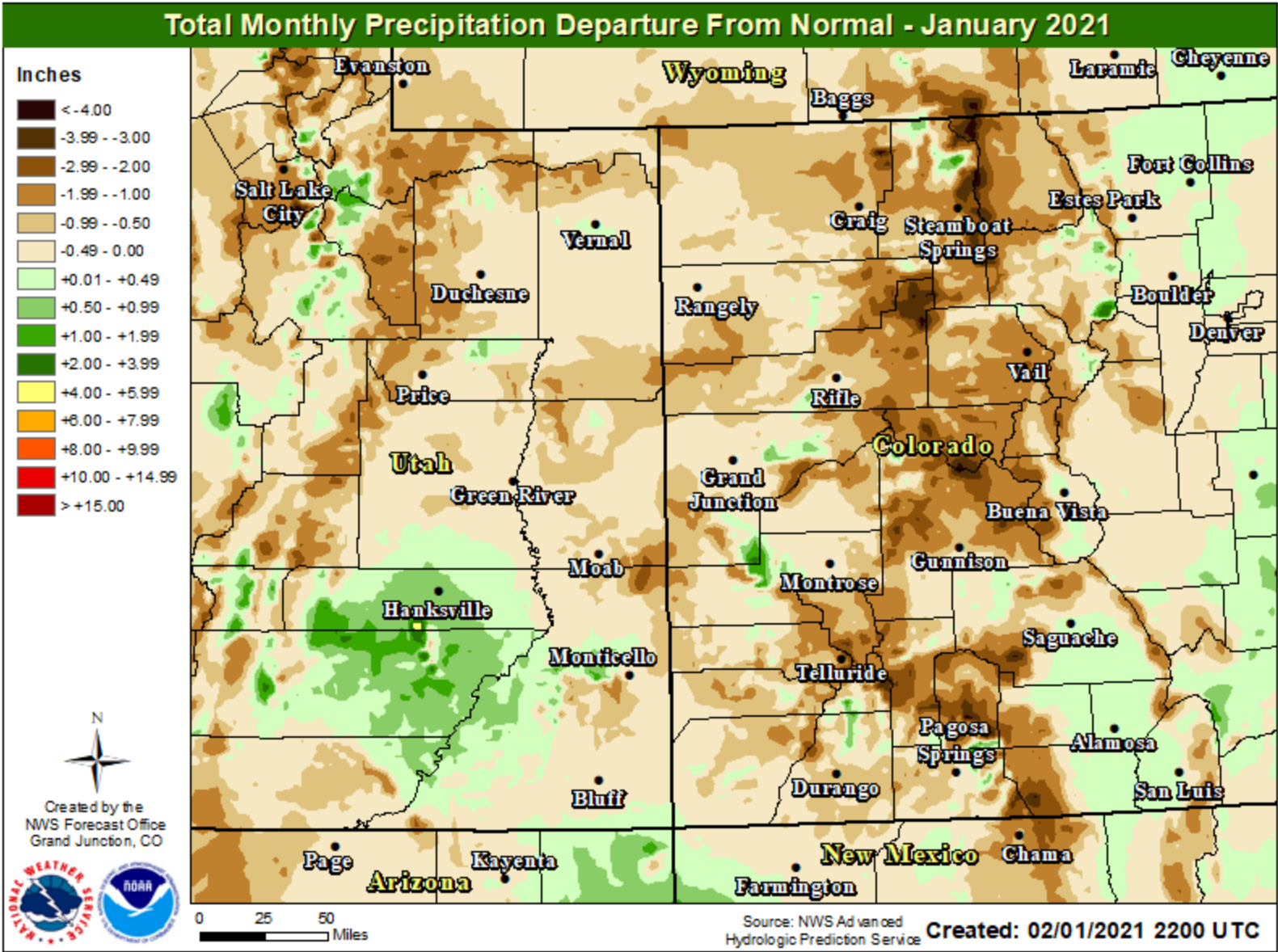
January 2021 Precipitation

Location	Total Precipitation (in.)	Departure from Normal (in.)
Aspen, CO	0.21	-0.82
Cortez, CO	0.81	-0.20
Craig, CO	0.54	-0.34
Durango, CO	0.74	-0.38
Grand Junction, CO	0.36	-0.22
Meeker, CO	0.87	Normal
Montrose, CO	0.26	-0.39
Rifle, CO	0.17	-0.64
Canyonlands Airport, UT	0.05	-0.59
Vernal, UT	0.49	-0.01

Total Monthly Precipitation

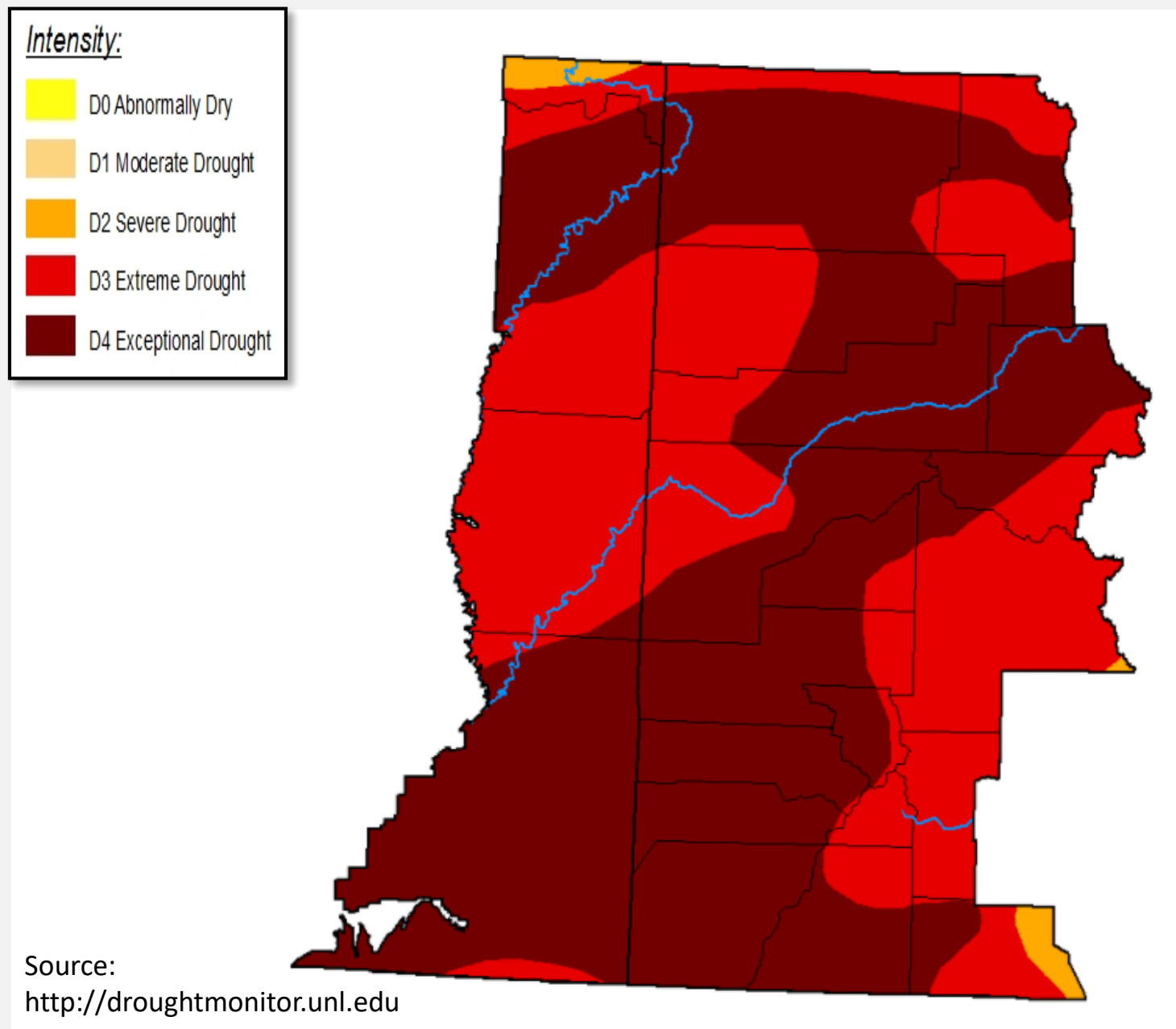


Monthly Precipitation Departure from Normal

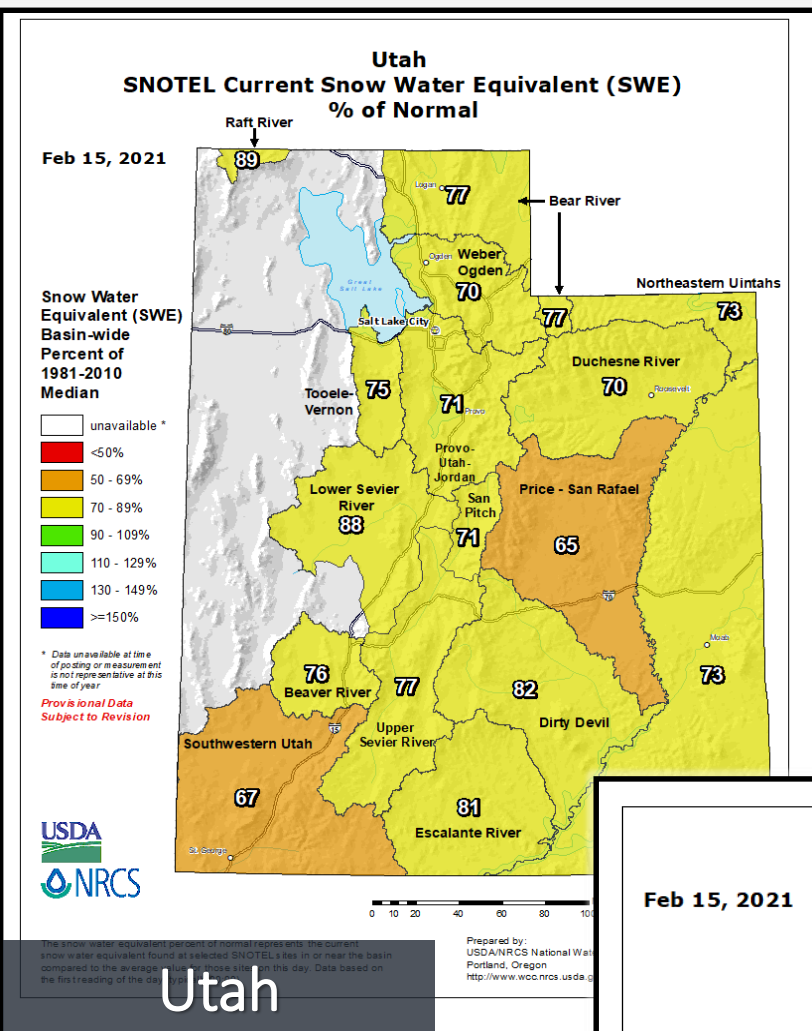


Drought Conditions as of February 9th

Extreme (D3) to exceptional (D4) drought persisted across the majority of eastern Utah and western Colorado throughout January. Meanwhile, severe (D2) drought conditions persisted across far northeast Utah and a small sliver of southwest Colorado.

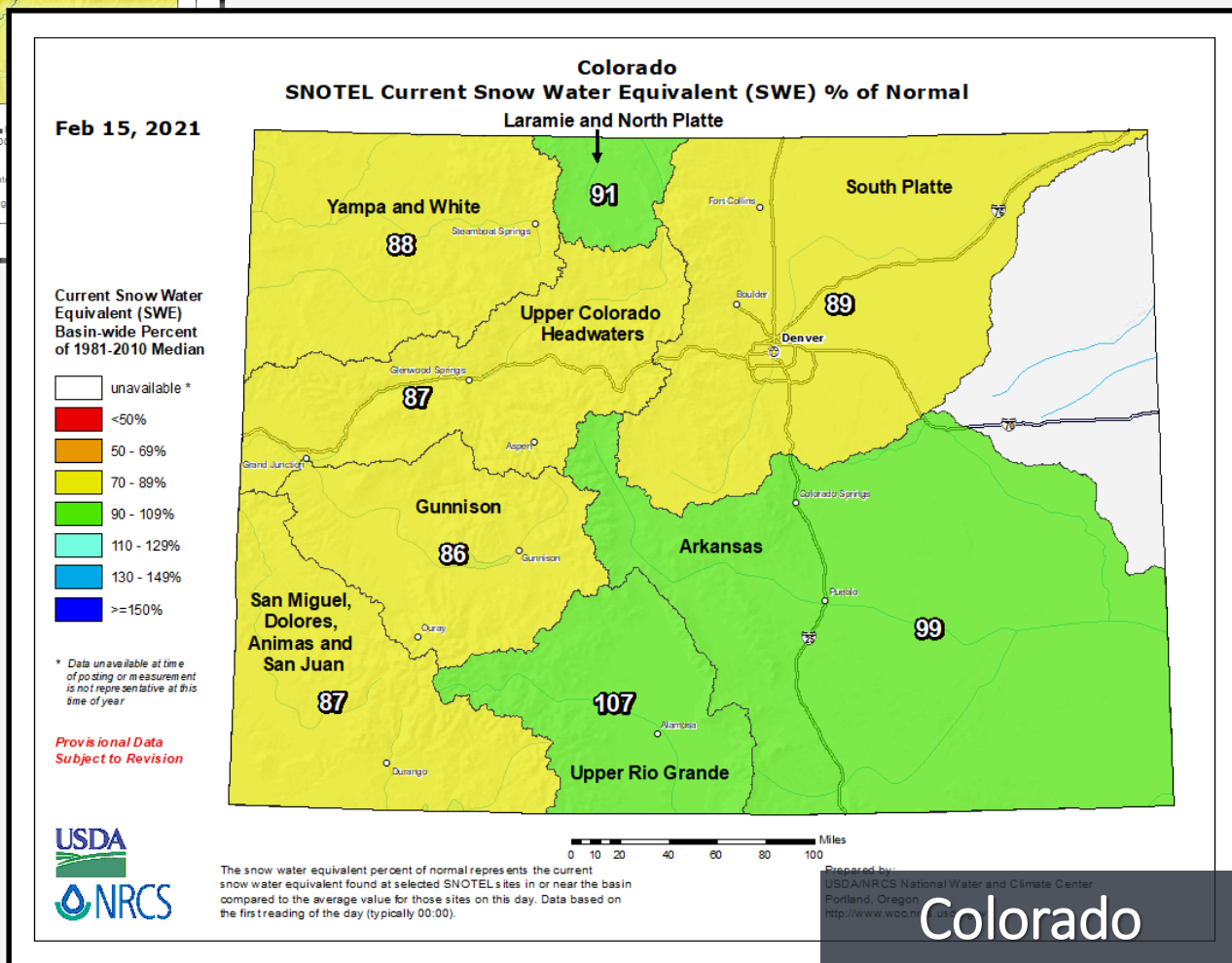


Snowpack Conditions as of February 15th



For Utah...The snowpack for the eastern Utah basins is around 70-75% of normal

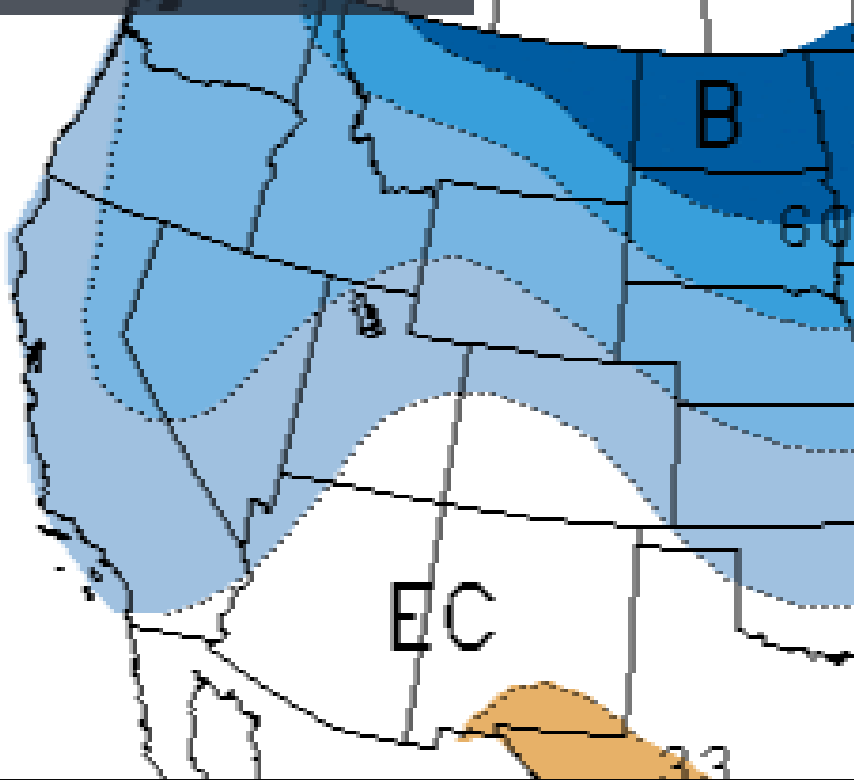
For Colorado...The snowpack for the western Colorado basins remains 80 to 90% of normal



February Outlook

For February, the latest outlook from the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) shows odds favoring colder than normal temperatures across northeast Utah and northwest Colorado. As far as precipitation goes, wetter than normal conditions are favored for the northern tier of the forecast area with no real guidance favoring either above or below normal precipitation for the southern zones at this time.

Temperatures



Precipitation

